



Kiowa pilot embodies Warrior Ethos

Story and photo by Spc. James P. Hunter
MNC-I PAO

The month of March is Women's History Month and it gives servicemembers the chance to recognize women who have made a difference in the world. Whether politically, medically or religiously, throughout the years women have proved to all that they are equal.

Women have come far in this male dominated world. From gaining the right to vote, to women in the Supreme Court, they have made themselves known.

Women make up nearly 15 percent of today's Armed Forces. In 1950, women only comprised two percent of the military.

Working out of Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mariko Kraft, pilot, Troop A, 217th Cavalry, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, flies an OH-58 D Kiowa Warrior in and around Balad. She has been flying there since November.

Kraft conducts patrols, reconnaissance surveillance missions and provides convoy security.

One December morning, Kraft and her



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mariko Kraft

Anaconda. When she received clearance to fire, Kraft engaged the enemy.

In the back of her mind, she knew this was a dangerous situation. She is in a combat zone where coalition forces are dying everyday, she said. She had to focus on her task. Her training allowed Kraft to focus on and engage the enemy, preventing death to her fellow servicemembers.

Not long after her first engagement with insurgents, Kraft experienced another.

Kraft was on a patrol responding to a large explosion on a pipeline. As she got closer to the location, she noticed two individuals departing the blast site. She patrolled the area looking for other individuals. Just

co-pilot were flying toward a refueling point when they spotted a vehicle in the middle of nowhere. She decided to investigate further, and to her surprise there were three men setting up rockets in the direction of LSA

moments later, a vehicle pulled up and an individual dismounted.

They were running low on fuel and she had to head back to Anaconda to refuel. She got word another pilot engaged the vehicle, but the two other individuals were still on the run.

Ground elements were not able to get airlift into the area because it was in a canal, so the ground commander authorized Kraft to disable the anti-coalition forces.

She located the two individuals and hovered above the ground just close enough to engage the enemy with her M-4 Carbine.

When Kraft returned to the LSA, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ron Jaramillo, maintenance test pilot, Troop A, 217th Cav., 159th CAB, 101st Abn. Div. (Air Assault), said the engagement did not affect Kraft physically or mentally.

"If it did, she didn't show it. It was just another day at work for her," Jaramillo said. "That's what makes her a true warrior."

Jaramillo, who has flown five missions with Kraft, said she is very motivated,

see KRAFT, page 3

Camp Victory Three-day forecast

Sunday



Mostly Sunny
High: 78 F
Low: 56 F

Monday



Mostly Sunny
High: 80 F
Low: 56 F

Tuesday



Sunny
High: 81 F
Low: 57 F

In today's Victory Times:

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Being a Soldier 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Story by Spc. James P. Hunter

MNC-I PAO

Duty is a word that defines a Soldier in the U.S. Army's very well being. In "Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus," duty is defined as something someone must do or a person's moral obligation.

First and foremost, when I signed the dotted line and joined the military, it was my duty from there on out to defend my country at any given cost. My duty is to the United States and the people of America.

Each day I head into work as a journalist, it is my duty to show up on time, in the right uniform and ready to tell the Soldier's story to the people of America. I must be ready and willing at all times to do this and do it to my best—exceeding the standard.

As a Soldier, I am not just a journalist. I am trained to defend myself and my fellow comrades in a time of war. I physically train to keep my body and mind fit so I can stay healthy and outlast the enemy. I qualify with my weapon, navigate with my compass and feet, and train to maintain my basic infantryman skills. It is my duty to maintain my basic soldiering skills especially during a time of war.

Day to day, every Soldier has his individual duties. He must wake up on time, conduct personal hygiene, arrive at work on time and be prepared to perform the tasks and duties of the day.

Even in his off time, it is a Soldier's obligation to conduct himself in a respectable manner. He must know his limits, whether it's drinking, driving or exercising. Sometimes

there is not anyone around to watch over a Soldier, so he must ensure that he is doing what is right. We have to police ourselves. Soldiers should not be told what to do. They must execute. It is their duty to do so.

A Soldier's main duty, in my opinion, is to look after his fellow comrades, whether in combat, in garrison or off-duty. He is the one who stands by you, watches your back, ensures that you are safe and doing the right thing. It is a Soldier's duty to do the same. What if the Soldier next to you is not performing to standard? Is it your obligation to police him up? Yes, it is. It is expected of you to do so. He may be unaware that what he is doing is wrong.

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Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain (Maj.) Charles M. Herring
Religious Support Operations
MNC-I Chaplain Office

Wisdom

"...in the heart of all who are wise-hearted I have put wisdom,..." Exodus 31:6

My grandfather was a wise man. He was a traditional old time country farmer from Snow Hill, Green County, North Carolina. All his relatives grew up on the "family farm." All his ancestors were farmers when they arrived in the Virginia colony. (North Carolina was once part of Virginia in the initial land grant.) He loved being a farmer. My grandfather would sit on the wide front porch after dinner and just rock slowly in a huge white porch rocker watching the activities in the yard.

Chickens, ducks, guinea hens, a few goats, cats and the dogs were always moving about in a slow leisurely amble through the brush-broom swept yard. The only time something moved fast was when the old one-eyed billy goat, "Sam", would go after one of the cats for rubbing against him. As I sat on my grandfather's lap I remember watching the dogs.

Grandpa told me I could learn a great deal from watching animals and especially the dogs. Grandpa always had at least a dozen dogs or "dawgs" as he called them.

We would watch them and then Grandpa would point out "Bay Boy", his Blue Tick Hound, eagerly wagging his tail sitting on the pickup tailgate and say, "Bay Boy can learn you to never pass up the chance to go for a joyride in the pickup."

Watching my Grandma wagging and pointing her finger at one of the pups for pulling down her just washed sheet from the clothes line, Grandpa laughed and pointed to "Trouble." (Actually my Grandma named him because every time she saw him she said, "Here comes trouble" and it stuck.) "What can I learn from Trouble?" I asked. Grandpa put a stern face on and said, "When it is in your best interest always practice obedience."

"Dynamite", the Jack Russell Terrier, was always running, chasing, digging or chewing on anything he could sink his teeth into. We would watch him chasing the goat for fun then turning around and running when the goat would turn and try to butt him. We both laughed and Grandpa said, "Now Dynamite learns you never pretend to be something you ain't. He is just plain dog, doing what dogs do."

"Sheriff", the German Shepherd (named because he was a gift from the local Sheriff), was the law for all the dogs on the farm. One of the cats came nuzzling up to Sheriff while he was trying to nap. He opened just one eye. Looked directly at the cat and gave a low growl. The cat took the hint and left immediately. "What can I

learn from Sheriff, Grandpa?" My grandpa thought but a second and said, "Avoid biting when a simple growl will do."

My grandma just put the scraps out under the big oak tree next to the kitchen and there was "Butch", the English Bulldog, gobbling down the last of the cherry pie. Licking the last bit off the tip of his nose that was rooted in the whole thing, my grandpa and I pointed together and laughed only as a child with his grandpa could laugh. With his hand on my tummy he would shake it and say, "Butch learns you to always eat the best things first."

Grandpa's farm would not be complete without the 15-year-old, gray-muzzled Bloodhound, named "Dixie." All Dixie did was lay about and sleep. That's all I ever saw her do anyway. "Grandpa", I asked, "is Dixie too old to teach me anything?" Grandpa smiled, picked me up on his broad shoulders and said, "Charlie, Dixie can teach you on warm summer days to drink plenty of water and lay under a shade tree."

I learned a lot from my grandpa and the "dawgs". Never pass up the chance to go for a joyride. When it is in your best interest, always practice obedience. Never pretend to be something you "ain't". Avoid biting when a simple growl will do. Always eat the best things first. On hot days drink lots of water and lay under a shade tree.

My grandfather was a wise man.

KRAFT

professional and eager to learn.

"This job can be very gruesome, but it doesn't seem to bother her," he said. "She is very well suited for the Kiowa Warrior."

Kraft said she always wanted to fly. She initially joined the U.S. Army in 1993, but did not qualify medically to fly so she enlisted as an interrogator.

Kraft joined the military because of her father, who enlisted voluntarily during Vietnam in 1966 because he felt it was his duty, she said. As Americans, Kraft feels everyone should have the same patriotism and serve their country, whether they spend two years or a career.

After four years of service, Kraft left the Army. During her separation from the military, Kraft continued to work and earned her bachelors degree.

She decided it was time to re-enlist in the military once again. Kraft received refractive eye surgery and with a waiver she applied and was accepted into flight school.

Kraft graduated flight school almost a year ago and since November has flown many missions throughout Iraq.

Kraft expressed her gratitude for her contribution in the war effort.

"Every time we go and find something, it's always nice to know that we helped prevent any kind of attack on the LSA," Kraft said. "If we provide security for a convoy, it's satisfying knowing that the convoy made it safely to its location."

Six months into her first deployment as an aviator, Kraft said she has gained a great deal of knowledge and experience.

For her efforts in foiling the insurgent acts, Kraft's command put her in for the Combat Action Badge and Air Medal. Kraft said the awards are great but are not the reason why she flies.

"The greatest satisfaction is knowing that we prevented possible injury and death," she said.

Kraft tracks down insurgents placing improvised explosive devices, firing rockets and mortars to ensure the safety of her fellow servicemembers and will continue to do so throughout her deployment, she added.

Mechanics keep helicopters in the sky

Story and photos by Spc. James P. Hunter
MNC-I PAO

Helicopters play a major role in the military's mission, providing security, transporting troops, and conducting reconnaissance surveillance and patrols from the sky.

In order to keep the aircraft running and the pilot flying to conduct the military's mission, mechanics are needed.

Mechanics with the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, work day and night repairing and preparing helicopters for various missions.

"When we get an aircraft for inspection and maintenance, we fix everything that needs repaired or corrected, ensuring there is zero damage on that aircraft so when it goes out for its next mission it's going to be safe to fly," said Sgt. Derek Taylor, Company B, repair platoon, 563rd Support Battalion, 159th CAB.

Aircrafts have to be structurally and operationally sound, said Spc. Michael Brown, shops platoon, 563rd Spt. Bn., 159th CAB. During their deployment, the 159th has provided high level maintenance quickly for each unit they are supporting.

The mechanics in the 159th CAB work on the OH-58 D Kiowa Warrior, the AH-64 Apache, UH-60 Blackhawk and CH-47 Chinook, which are all used for base and patrol security, and to perform air assault missions.

"Our units are structured around an infantry based unit, which is what the Army is," Brown said. "Our aviation units are providing infantry support so the Army can accomplish its mission."

Aircrafts are repaired based on scheduled maintenance. Different teams are given an aircraft for inspection and each troop is assigned an area to inspect and repair.



Mechanics with the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, take a break from repairing a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter. The mechanics repair various helicopters to ensure they are mission capable.

If a fault is found, then the mechanic repairs or replaces the item. If there is a problem with a major component, such as the engine, rotor or hydraulics system, then the component is passed off to the repair shop.

The repair shop specializes in repairing the major components of the aircraft. Unlike the repair platoon, which specializes in repairing a specific aircraft, the shops platoon has the ability to fix the engine or rotor blades on each aircraft.

When they receive the part, they completely break it down, repair it, and the repair platoon replaces the

part in the helicopter.

Each component has a certain life span, so the shops team tries to avoid any major problems by replacing or repairing it prior to it going bad.

When faults are found within the communications system, the avionics platoon is needed to fix the problem.

Avionics deals with receivers and transmitters, channels and frequencies, and the Doppler Radar System.

The avionics objective is to ensure the communications systems are working proficiently so the pilots can go forth with the mission, said Spc. Elisha Harmon, avionics platoon, Co. B, 563rd Spt. Bn., 159th CAB.

When an aircraft reaches 150 to 200 flight hours, the entire aircraft is taken apart and repairs are made as needed.

The 159th CAB mechanics also deal with unscheduled maintenance.

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MECHANICS

They run 24-hour operations, so they can be on site immediately to address the situation.

It's an immediate repair, and anywhere from just a few minutes to a few hours the aircraft is mission capable, said Brown.

"If they have a component fail once they're in the air, it could be a life or death

situation," Brown said. "The aircraft is an immediate priority."

The aircraft gets fixed so they have the available air support needed to conduct various missions, he added.

When the aircraft is repaired, test flown and all fine-tune adjustments have been made, the aircraft is ready to fly and continue on its mission, said Brown.



Two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters prepare to take off from Logistics Support Area Anaconda to transport troops. Mechanics with the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade repair various helicopters to ensure they are mission capable.

SOLDIERS

When in combat, a Soldier's duty intensifies. He is given more responsibility and guidelines to follow and follow through efficiently. Being in combat is a serious matter. We are dealing with life and death. It is our obligation to ensure that everything we do is done correctly.

Most Soldiers will encounter guard duty during their deployment and this is a very important task. Though it may be escorting Iraqi civilian workers around post or guarding check points, the job is important.

If a Soldier misses his assigned duty or is even late he could be risking the lives of many

people. If one does miss duty and was assigned to a check point someone else will be grabbed from a less important detail to cover down. But what about the Iraqi civilian worker who needs to be escorted around post? Now they are one Soldier short and an Iraqi may not be able to fulfill his obligations. With that being said, the Iraqi people are our obligation also. It is our duty to provide them with the utmost support and respect. We are fighting a war and trying to help them build a stable government all at the same time.

With us at war, there is a good chance Soldiers will see combat face-to-face. As a journalist, I travel with fellow Soldiers to tell their story to the public.

Though that is my job at the given time, I still must ensure I am scanning the roadways, looking for possible improvised explosive devices, informing the tank commander of any possible danger and providing them with extra support if needed. I am a Soldier. I have duties—many duties.

When I am not doing these things, I am putting myself, the Soldiers and our mission at risk. There have been many deaths during this war on terrorism and we do not need to add to that total because one person was not doing what they were asked or trained to do.

So what is expected of us as Soldiers? Plain and simple: follow the guidelines directed by those appointed over us,

perform our tasks to standard and look out for our fellow Soldier. It is that simple.

Performing our duties is a simple task. It seems to be hard for some Soldiers to follow through. Why? As Soldiers, we need to draw a fine line between our desires and our duties. It is a must that these simple tasks handed down to us are completed. We must not take these tasks for granted.

Every Soldier and civilian is counting on us to perform our duties so that our freedom and rights that we fought very hard for are never put at risk or possibly diminished. We as Soldiers are the protectors of the free world. Our duty is to be a Soldier and to perform like one.

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Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 - 8 p.m.
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Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

Chapel (Bldg. 31)

Sunday:

Protestant Service 7 and 8:45 a.m.
Catholic Mass 10:30 a.m.
Gospel Service Noon
Mormon (LDS) 2 p.m.
Episcopal 4 p.m.
Full Life Service 6 p.m.

Saturday:

7th Day Adventist 11 a.m.
Catholic Mass 8 p.m.
Mini-Chapel (Bldg. 2)

Friday:

Jewish Service 6:30 p.m.
Eastern Orthodox services:

Saturday:

Vespers 5 p.m.
Confession 5:30 p.m.
Bible Study 7 p.m.

Sunday:

Divine Liturgy 9 a.m.

Post Office

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday 1 - 5 p.m.

Golby Troop Medical Clinic

Sick Call Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Dental Sick Call:

Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic:

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

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We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.

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